

Message Text

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ACTION CU-04

INFO OCT-01 NEA-06 ISO-00 SMI-01 USIA-15 AID-20 SCI-06

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FM AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1816

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE THESSALONIKI 0070

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OEXC, PINT, GR

SUBJECT: SMITHSONIAN STAFFERS TO VISIT GREECE

REF: STATE 024963

1. VISIT OF SMITHSONIAN STAFFERS KOENIG AND RAIM WELCOMED. HOWEVER, NOTE KOENIG'S EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE IN "BALKAN SONGS AND DANCES" AND HIS LINGUISTIC ABILITY IN BULGARIAN AND MACEDONIAN; FURTHER THAT MRS. RAIM IS EXPERT ON EASTERN EUROPEAN FOLK SONGS.

2. ASSUME THAT THEIR PROGRAM HAS BEEN CAREFULLY VETTED WITH GREEK EMBASSY WASHINGTON, AS INDICATED REFTTEL, WHICH IN TURN HAS COORDINATED WITH GOG ATHENS. HOWEVER, WOULD INVITE PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO HIGH SENSITIVITY IN NORTHERN GREECE TO "MACEDONIAN" AND BULGARIAN CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES AS TRENDING AWAY FROM GREEK NATIONALISM AND TOWARD SEPARATISM. CASE IN POINT WAS THAT OF TAMBURITZAN SLAVIC FOLKLORE DANCE GROUP FROM DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY (THESS'S A-42, JULY 26, 1972), WHOSE PROGRAM FEATURING "MACEDONIAN" THEMES WAS CANCELLED SUMMARILY BY GOG, FOLLOWED BY ORDER THAT ALL FUTURE PROGRAMS BE CLEARED IN ADVANCE BY MIN. OF CULTURE.

3. ALTHOUGH NEW LEADERSHIP MAY HAVE RELAXED SOMEWHAT IN
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THIS REGARD, WOULD URGE THAT BOTH KOENIG AND RAIM BE FULLY

AWARE THESE SENSITIVITIES ON PART BOTH OFFICIALS AND MANY
NORTHERN GREEK CITIZENS BEFORE ARRIVING THESSALONIKI.
FURTHERMORE THAT BEFORE THEY DEPART ATHENS WE BE ASSURED
THAT APPROPRIATE GOG OFFICIALS FULLY UNDERSTAND AND
SUPPORT DETAILS THEIR PROGRAM IN NORTHERN GREECE.

4. WHILE FACT MAY NOT BECOME KNOWN TO GOG OFFICIALDOM,
FINANCING OF TRIP WITH POLISH ZLOTYS AND NEXT DESTINATION
WARSAW COULD ALSO RAISE SOME EYEBROWS IN THIS STRONGLY
ANTI-COMMUNIST, CONSERVATIVE AREA.
BRENNAN

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